

FDA study finds antibiotic use in agriculture increased 6.7 percent from 2009 to 2010

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee and the only microbiologist in Congress, today released the following statement on new numbers released by the Food and Drug Administration regarding the skyrocketing rate of antibiotic use in agriculture.

The [FDA study](#) found that antibiotic use in agriculture was up 6.7 percent in 2010 from 2009. The data shows that increases in use of lincosamides, penicillins and tetracyclines account for the majority of overall increase in antibiotic use. All three antibiotics are used to address human health.

Since 2007, Congresswoman Slaughter has been the author of legislation titled [The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act \(PAMTA\)](#), to preserve the effectiveness of antibiotics for the treatment of human disease.

"The numbers don't lie – antibiotic use in farm animals is on the rise and the problem is getting worse. By all means, if an animal is sick, it should be treated with antibiotics. But to fatten up healthy animals through the daily dosing of antibiotics – drugs that should be preserved to treat human illnesses – is malpractice and it's contributing to an increase in deadly antibiotic resistant bacteria.

"This irresponsible use represents a serious threat to public health in America. Just last year, 60,000 Americans died in hospitals as a result of antibiotic resistant infections. That is simply unacceptable. The FDA needs to take common sense steps to reduce the needless use of antibiotics in healthy animals, and protect human beings."